



78

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN



TODD MCFARLANE AND IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS...

BLOODSTAINS

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SPAWN 76 Summary

Since Spawn was attacked by the Heap, he has become more and more painfully aware of the world's darkness and suffering and he turns to Cog for answers. Cog finally reveals his own history and dilemma of being trapped between two worlds and neither claiming him. He then proposes that Spawn defeat Malebolgia and become the ruler of Hell, thus ending the war between Heaven and Hell. Meanwhile, Bobby sinks further into despair as he struggles to come to terms with Bootsy's death and Twitch takes a bullet as he and Sam search the alleys for Spawn.

12:01 A.M.

THREE DAYS.

IT'S BEEN
THREE DAYS
MY BEST
FRIEND'S
BEEN
LYING IN A
HOSPITAL
BED.

THREE DAYS
OF LISTENING
TO SOME DAMN
MACHINE
BEEPING AWAY...

beep beep beep beep

... AND THE I-V
DRIPPING LIKE
A GODDAMN
CHINESE WATER
TORTURE.

THREE DAYS OF LOOKING
AT MY PARTNER, TWITCH
WILLIAMS. LAID OUT LIKE A
SIDE OF BEEF WITH A .22
SLUG IN A FRONTAL LOBE
AND KNOWING IT'S ALL
MY FAULT.

LISTENING TO
DOCTORS SAY AN
OPERATION'S TOO
RISKY. SEEING
TWITCH'S POOR
WIFE BAWL HER
EYES OUT AND
NOT HAVING THE
NERVE TO LOOK
HER IN THE FACE.

DAMN IT,
TWITCH...
I'M SO
SORRY.


THREE DAYS
OF WISHING
I WAS DEAD.



I NEVER BEEN THE SPIRITUAL TYPE.

EVEN WHEN I WAS A KID AND THE NUNS WOULD SMACK ME AROUND AND MAKE ME RECITE THE 'ACT OF CONTRITION,' I FIGURED THEY WERE FULL OF CRAP.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN "PRAGMATIC," AS TWITCH WOULD SAY. I MEASURE MY LIFE IN CIGARETTE BUTTS AND STYROFOAM COFFEE CUPS.



I WONDER WHAT HE'D SAY ABOUT ME NOW, ABOUT THE MESS I GOT US IN. I KNOW WHAT THE NUNS WOULD CALL IT:

"A LONG DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL."


PLEASE...



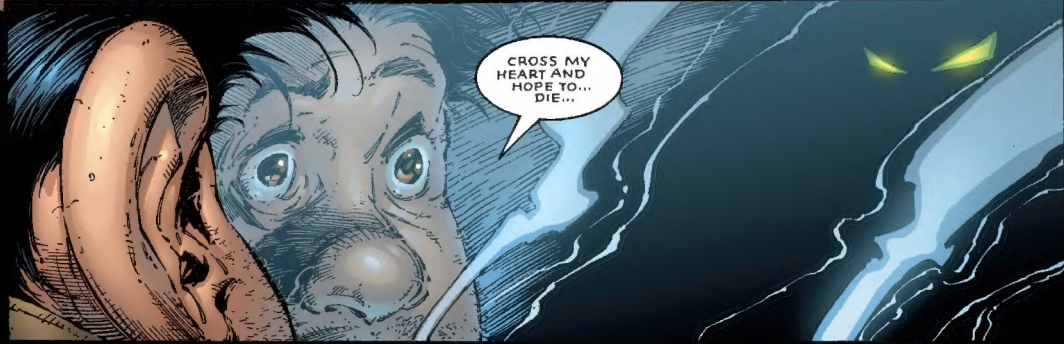
...IF THERE'S **ANYBODY** OUT THERE... ANYONE AT ALL...




... JUST MAKE SURE MY BUDDY'S OKAY. PLEASE?



JUST LET HIM BE ALL RIGHT, AND I SWEAR, I'LL DO **ANYTHING**. I SWEAR TO GOD I WILL...



CROSS MY HEART AND HOPE TO... DIE...



SAM
BURKE... YOU
SHOULD BE
CAREFUL WHAT
YOU WISH
FOR IN THE
DARK.

SPAWN?!

HOLY
CHRIST,
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

LT. COL. AL SIMMONS,
A.K.A. SPAWN, SOME
KIND OF ALLEY
DWELLING STREET-
VIGILANTE-SLASH-
PSYCHO-CASE.

DID
YOU MEAN
WHAT YOU
SAID?

WHAT?

YOU SAID
YOU WOULD DO
ANYTHING TO HAVE
YOUR FRIEND WELL
AGAIN. DID YOU
MEAN IT?

THIS IS THE
BASTARD THAT
COST ME AND
TWITCH OUR
BADGES.

WE WERE TRYING
TO BRING HIM IN
WHEN TWITCH
GOT SHOT.

YEAH
I MEANT
IT. WHAT'S
IT TO YOU?
WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?

HEY,
GET
AWAY
FROM
HIM!

I SAID
GET AWAY
FROM HIM,
YOU BIG RED
FREAK!!
WHAT DO YOU
THINK YOU'RE
DOING?!!

LISTEN TO ME AND LISTEN WELL. YOUR PARTNER WILL RECOVER. WHEN SUNRISE COMES HE WILL AWAKEN AND BE IN FULL HEALTH.

THE DOCTORS WILL BE BAFFLED AND CALL IT A MIRACLE. BUT YOU WILL KNOW THE TRUTH.

1 AM GOING
TO HOLD YOU
TO YOUR WORD,
MR. BURKE. YOU
BELONG TO
ME NOW.
BOTH
OF YOU!

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

HAT?
I
SWEAR
TO GOD,
IF YOU
HURT
HIM--!



"BELONG"
TO YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT,
SIMMONS?

YEAH,
THAT'S RIGHT!
I KNOW YOUR
NAME. I KNOW
YOUR LITTLE
SET-UP.

EX-
GOVERNMENT
SPOOK, PRE-
TENDING TO BE
DEAD... ON THE
RUN FOR SOME
REASON...

I DON'T
KNOW
EXACTLY
WHAT YOUR
SICK LITTLE
GAME IS, BUT
I DON'T WANT
ANY--

LOOK
AT ME,
BURKE.
KNOW
WHAT
I AM.

Ah
JEEZ!

I DO NOT
PRETEND
ANYTHING!
LOOK AT THE
FACE OF YOUR
NEW MASTER
AND UNDER-
STAND... YOU
HAVE MUCH TO
LEARN!

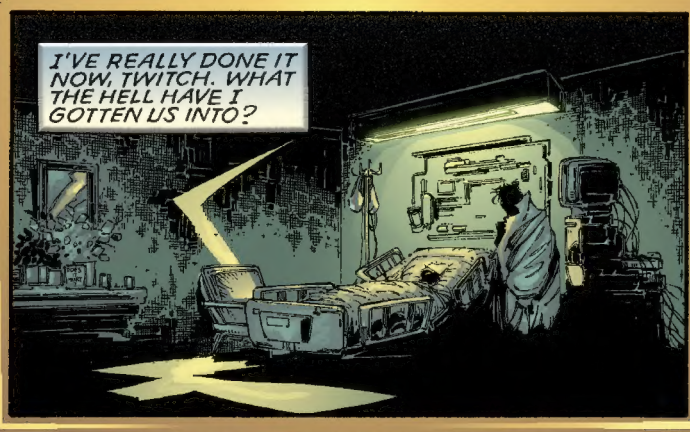
LOOK
AT ME!

LIFE
AND DEATH!
THAT'S LESSON
ONE!

I WILL
CALL ON
YOU SOON.
BE READY.

AND THEN
HE WAS GONE.
JUST LIKE THAT.

I'VE REALLY DONE IT
NOW, TWITCH. WHAT
THE HELL HAVE I
GOTTEN US INTO?



1:12 A.M.

EVER GET THE FEELING THAT YOUR WHOLE LIFE IS ONE LONG, SICK JOKE? THAT SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE IS LAUGHING HIS ASS OFF AT ALL OF THIS?

"LET'S TUNE IN TO ANOTHER GUT-BUSTING EPISODE OF 'CRAP ON SAMMY'! SEE WHAT KIND OF MESS OL' FATTY'S GOT HIMSELF INTO THIS TIME!"

LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, THAT'S BEEN HOW IT FEELS.

JUST CAN'T SEEM TO CATCH A GODDAMN BREAK.

Oh, HELLO.

Uh, HEY...

I'VE SEEN YOU HERE A LOT LATELY, FAMILY MEMBER?

NO. PARTNER.

I SEE... "LIFE PARTNER"?

WHAT?! NO! PARTNER PARTNER. WE'RE, uh, DETECTIVES...

Oh. MAY I ASK WHAT HAPPENED?

SOME CLOWN TOOK A SHOT AT US. NO RHYME OR REASON. AND NOW TWITCH... WELL THE DOCTORS SAY IT DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.

DON'T GIVE UP HOPE, OKAY. YOU SHOULD PROBABLY GO HOME AND GET SOME REST. YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A BREAK.

YEAH. I COULD USE A LOT OF THINGS.

TROUBLE IS I
CAN'T SLEEP. I
JUST KEEP
PLAYING IT OVER
AND OVER IN
MY MIND.

TRYING TO
PUT THE
PIECES TO-
GETHER SO
THEY MAKE
SENSE.

IT'S MY FAULT WE
WERE IN THE
ALLEYS THAT NIGHT.
I INSISTED WE GO
TRACK SIMMONS
DOWN. TWITCH
ONLY CAME ALONG
TO WATCH MY BACK.

SO WHAT HAPPENS?
WE DON'T FIND
SPAWNY AND
DECIDE TO CALL
IT A NIGHT.

BUT THEN SOME
OLD GUY COMES
OUT OF NOWHERE.
HE WHIPS OUT A
ROD AND STARTS
SHOOTING! SO I
RETURN FIRE
AND TAKE THE
BASTARD DOWN.

THE SHOOTER
WAS D.O.A. ...
NEVER EVEN GOT
A CHANCE TO
BEAT A REASON
OUT OF HIS
USELESS HIDE.

AND GET THIS. I FIND OUT LATER
THAT THIS FOSSIL WAS JUST LET
OUTTA THE PEN LIKE 10 MINUTES
BEFORE HE STARTS SPITTIN'
LEAD AT US.

BASTARD TOOK A 30-YEAR YAWN
FOR MURDER ONE AND TO CELE-
BRATE HIS FIRST NIGHT OF FREEDOM
HE DECIDES HE'S GOING TO
PERFORATE A COUPLA STRANGERS.

WHAT'S THIS CITY COMING TO?
AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF, NOW I
SEEM TO HAVE MADE A DEAL
WITH THE KING OF THE
WALKING DEAD.

THEN I TURN
AROUND AND SEE
MY PARTNER, MY
BEST FRIEND,
LYING ON THE
GROUND WITH A
BULLET HOLE IN
THE FOREHEAD.

"I WILL CALL
ON YOU SOON.
BE READY."
WHAT THE
HELL WAS
THAT? CHRIST,
I'M SO TIRED...

5:15 A.M.

I GUESS IT'S
BEGINNING.

zzzzzzzz

THIRD HOMELESS
MURDER VICTIM
FOUND IN BETHESDA
END
S!

Huh?
WHAZZAT?

7:41 A.M.

I HEAD BACK TO THE HOSPITAL TO CHECK ON TWITCH. SEE IF SPAWN KEPT HIS PART OF THE BARGAIN.

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I AIN'T HOLDING MY BREATH.

WELL, I'LL BE DAMNED! LOOK AT THAT. ROSY-CHEEKED AND WIDE AWAKE, JUST LIKE PROMISED.

JEEZ. LOOK AT HELEN. IF SHE WAS BEAMING ANY BRIGHTER I'D NEED SUN BLOCK.

SAM! GOOD TO SEE YOU, MY FRIEND!

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? OUR PRAYERS WERE ANSWERED. THE DOCTORS SAY IT WAS A MIRACLE!

THEY WANT TO KEEP HIM ANOTHER DAY OR SO, TO MAKE SURE, BUT THEY SAY HE'S GOING TO BE FINE!

TWITCH, OLD BUDDY... I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GOOD IT IS TO SEE YOU BETTER. MAN, I WAS REALLY WORRIED THERE FOR A WHILE.

OK, YOU'RE BACK. YOUR FRIEND'S BETTER? THAT'S WONDERFUL! I TOLD YOU NOT TO GIVE UP HOPE.

YEAH... LOOK AT THEM. LOOK AT HIS FAMILY. I HATE TO EVEN INTERRUPT.

BY THE WAY, I'M SARAH. SARAH FROST. I'M A DOCTOR HERE. I ALSO RUN THE OUT-REACH CENTER DOWN ON HOUSTON. "SAVING GRACE."

YEAH, I HEARD OF THAT. I'M SAM. SAM BURKE. GOOD TO MEET YOU, SARAH.

SO MAYBE I WAS WRONG. MAYBE THINGS ARE LOOKING UP.

4:22 P.M. ...
BACK AT
THE OFFICE.

AIN'T A PRETTY PICTURE
WE GOT HERE. THREE
HOMELESS PERSONS
DEAD IN FOUR DAYS.

CONNECTED? WELL,
THERE'S NOTHING
CONCLUSIVE, BUT THE
MEDIA SEEMS TO THINK
SO. SO DOES SPAWN.

DAMN, I WISH I COULD
FIGURE HIM OUT. HE
CAN'T POSSIBLY BE WHAT
HE SAYS HE IS, CAN HE?

STILL, I SAW
WHAT I SAW.

MADE SOME CALLS, GOT
WHAT I COULD ON THIS
CASE. AIN'T MUCH, THOUGH.

> Sigh <

FIRST VICTIM WAS
FOUND FOUR NIGHTS
AGO, SLUMPED AGAINST
AN ALLEY WALL. THROAT
SLIT EAR TO EAR.
PERFECT, SCALPEL CLEAN.

VICTIM WAS
IDENTIFIED AS
RONNY "WHISTLER"
ENTWHISTLE. HAD
A BLOOD ALCOHOL
LEVEL LIKE TED
KENNEDY AT
OKTOBERFEST. NO
SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE.

A FEW YARDS AWAY, AN EMPTY GIN
BOTTLE WAS FOUND. HAD THE VICTIM'S
FINGERPRINTS AND THOSE OF A
SECOND PARTY, AS WELL AS SMALL
TRACES OF THE VICTIM'S BLOOD.

CLERK AT NEIGHBORHOOD LIQUOR
STORE REMEMBERS ENTWHISTLE
BUYING THE BOOZE. SAID HE CAME
IN A LOT, ALWAYS ASKED FOR THE
RECEIPT.

AIN'T THAT RICH? A GUY
DOESN'T HAVE A POT TO
PISS IN BUT HE'S SAVING
HIS RECEIPTS.



SO FIGURE ONE BUM KILLS ANOTHER
FOR A BOTTLE OF HOOCH, RIGHT?
WORSE THINGS HAPPEN IN THIS
CITY EVERY DAY.

Aw, BUT THERE'S A TWIST: SEEMS
ENTWHISTLE WAS WANTED FOR A
BAG JOB HE PULLED IN VEGAS THREE
YEARS AGO. PISSSED OFF A LOT OF
THE WRONG PEOPLE TOO.

SO MAYBE IT'S HIS PAST
CATCHING UP TO HIM.

BUT THEN, THIRTY HOURS
LATER CORPSE #2 SHOWS
UP. MALE HISPANIC, 25-35.
NO I.D. YET.

WENT INTO CONVULSIONS
AFTER SHOOTING UP A
DOSE OF CHINESE ROCK
UNDER A BRIDGE LESS
THAN 10 BLOCKS FROM
THE FIRST VICTIM.

AGAIN, SO WHAT?
JUNKIES O.D. ALL THE
TIME. BUT THIS ONE
DIDN'T O.D. HE WAS
POISONED. THE
SYRINGE WAS TREATED
WITH SOME KIND OF
NEURO-TOXIN.

NOT THE SMACK, THE SYRINGE.

THE RIG'S BEEN TRACED TO A
MOBILE NEEDLE-SWAPPING
PROGRAM. A BIG WHITE TRUCK
THAT BRINGS FRESH NEEDLES
TO DRUG ADDICTS. THAT'S YER
TAX DOLLARS AT WORK, FOLKS.

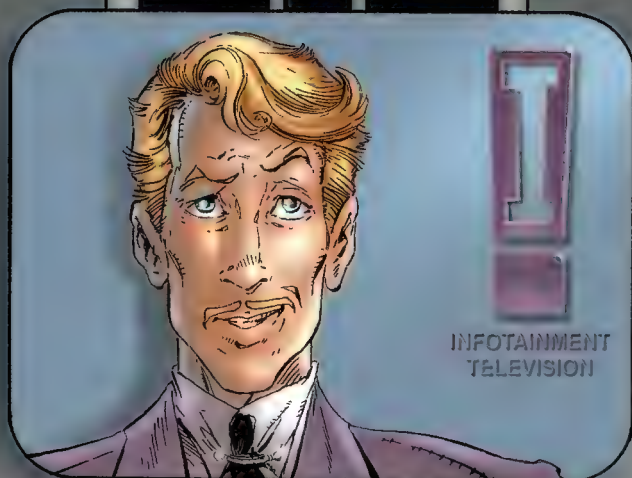
AND FINALLY, CONTESTANT #3, NIGHT
BEFORE LAST. AFRICAN-AMERICAN
FEMALE, AGE 60-65.

FOUND IN A DUMPSTER, WITH
HER FREAKIN' HANDS CUT OFF
AND HER TONGUE SLICED OUT.
NO I.D. ON HER EITHER.

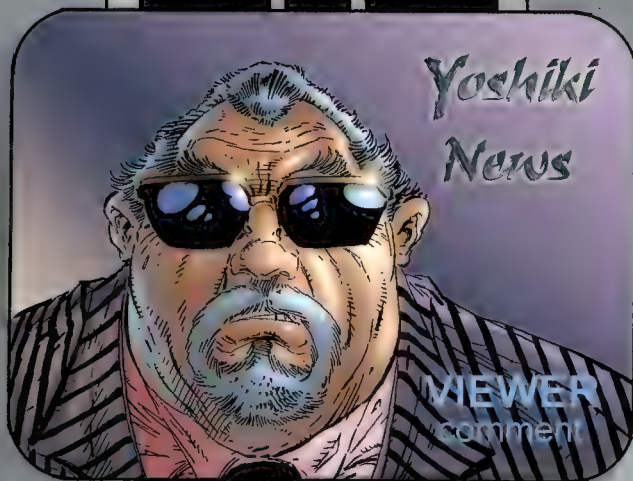
A LOT OF BLOOD, BUT
NONE OF IT LEADING
IN ANY DIRECTION. I
GOT A BAD FEELING
THIS IS GOING TO GET
WORSE BEFORE IT
GETS BETTER.



...INCREASINGLY GRUESOME STRING OF MURDERS AMONG NEW YORK CITY'S HOMELESS POPULATION HAS SPARKED OUTCRIES FROM MANY CORNERS. WHILE NO CONCRETE LINK BETWEEN THE CRIMES HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, CITY OFFICIALS ARE PLEDGING THEIR SUPPORT, AGREEING TO OPEN UP EMERGENCY SHELTERS UNTIL THE KILLER OR KILLERS ARE APPREHENDED. POLICE COULD NOT RELEASE ANY INFORMATION ON THEIR PROGRESS IN THE CASE, BUT INSIST THEY ARE "PURSUING THE MATTER WITH ALL DUE DILIGENCE."



THERE'S NO SHORTAGE OF *ENVY* DIRECTED TOWARD THE MAYOR'S OFFICE LATELY, AND IT'S COMING FROM NO LESS THAN THE EXECS AT THE *TOP AD AGENCIES*. THE REDEFINITION OF THE HOMELESS AS "OUTDOORSMEN" AND THE IMPLIED MAKEOVER OF THE CITY'S STREETS AS "THE UNTAMED FRONTIER" HAVE BEEN *GENUINELY* INSPIRED EXPANSIONS OF THE THEME-PARK ATMOSPHERE THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS EMBRACED. RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN GROWING NUMBERS OF THE POOR AND WRETCHED, AND AT LAST THEY HAVE A DESIGNATED *PLACE* IN THE *SCHEME* OF THINGS!



WELL, IMAGINE MY *SURPRISE!* IT LOOKS TO BE MORE OF THE SAME OLD SAME OLD IN THE "*NEW*" *NEW YORK!* WHILE THE ILLUSTRIOUS MAYOR WOULD LIKE TO PRETEND THAT THERE ARE *NO* REMAINING HOMELESS PEOPLE IN HIS FAIR CITY, THE CURRENT SPATE OF VIOLENCE HAS PUT A MIGHTY DING IN THE CITY'S CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED, FAMILY-FRIENDLY *IMAGE*. A SPOKESPERSON FOR TOURIST RELATIONS CONCEDES THAT THE LATEST MURDER SPREE MIGHT "VERY WELL HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE CITY'S NATIONAL PROFILE." MIGHT I *DIFFER* WITH THIS ESTEEMED SHILL FOR THE GODS OF COMMERCE? IF ANYTHING, OUR TOWN CAN NOW *TRULY* BOAST OF HAVING SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE! FROM THE THEATRE DISTRICT IN MIDTOWN TO BUTCHERTOWN IN THE BOWERY, THERE'S NO DENYING THAT *IT'S A HELLUVA TOWN.*

TWO DAYS LATER.
10:03 P.M.

GOT A CALL FROM
AN OLD FRIEND
ON THE FORCE.
A FOURTH BODY
WAS FOUND.
THIS TIME IN
CENTRAL PARK.

THE MEDIA JACKALS
ARE ALREADY
PICKING OVER THE
CARCASS BY THE
TIME I ARRIVE.

HEY, SAM.

SILBERT.
WHAT WE
GOT HERE?

WE MAKE
HIM A WHITE
MALE, MAYBE 50
YEARS OLD. HOME-
LESS, JUST LIKE
THE REST. COUPLA
JOGGERS SPOTTED
HIM WHILE
RUNNING.

THEY'RE
STILL IN
SHOCK.

DETECTIVE
S.O. SILBERT.
"S.O.S." FOR
SHORT. HE'S
A FINE COP.
ONE OF THE
GOOD ONES.

HOLD ON
TO YOUR
LUNCH, SAMMY.
I TELL YA, I
NEVER SEEN ANY-
THING LIKE
THIS ONE.

Hmmph.

SILBERT'S
SEEN IT
ALL IN HIS
DAY. TAKES
A LOT TO
SHAKE
HIM. THIS
CAN'T BE
GOOD.

SILBERT WAS RIGHT. IT'S ALL I CAN DO TO KEEP THAT LAST CHILI DOG FROM MAKING AN ENCORE.

WHITE MALE. APPROXIMATELY 50 YEARS OLD.

STRIPPED NAKED AND CRUCIFIED TO A GODDAMN TREE WITH A PAIR OF TEMPERED STEEL HUNTING KNIVES.

CASTRATED... THE GENITALS SHOVED UP INSIDE THE ABDOMEN.

JESUS CHRIST.

AND TO TOP IT OFF, A TYPEWRITTEN NOTE LITERALLY PINNED TO THE VICTIM'S CHEST.

OUR KILLER'S GETTING BOLDER.

ALL THE WHILE, SOME JERKWAD FROM THE POST IS TAKING PHOTOS LIKE IT WAS A FREAKIN' FASHION SHOW.

THIS WAS A MURDER CASE. NOW IT'S A GODDAMN MEDIA EVENT.

2:09 A.M.
THE MORGUE.

HERE
YA GO.
GENUINE
"PRODUCTO
de CUBA."

A WELL-PLACED
INCENTIVE GETS
ME IN FOR THE
PRIVATE TOUR.

MUCHOS
GRACIAS,
AMIGO.
HERE. RUB THIS
UNDER YOUR
NOSE. IT
KILLS THE
SMELL.

Sniff

HOW COME
YOU DON'T USE
THAT STUFF FOR
THE SMELL?

Ah, YOU GET
USED TO IT AFTER
A WHILE.

SO HERE HE
IS, THE STIFF
D'JOUR. NOTHING
TOO UNUSUAL, IF
YOU DON'T COUNT
THE FACT HIS NADS
ARE TICKLING
HIS KIDNEYS.

BIG
GUY. MUSTA
PUT UP A
HELLUVA
FIGHT.

J. DOE

NOPE. NO
STRUGGLE. HE WAS
DRUGGED FIRST.

WHAT WITH?

WE'RE STILL
DOING THE
WORK UP.

KEEP ME
POSTED.

GOT
SOMETHING
ELSE TO SHOW
YOU.

YEAH?
WHAT'S
THAT?

REMEMBER
THE GUY WHO
TOOK A SHOT AT
YOU? THIS IS HIM.
Ook... GETTING
A LITTLE
RIPE.

INTERESTING
THING IS, YOU
AIN'T AS GOOD OF A
SHOT AS YOU THINK
YOU ARE. YOU GOT
HIM IN THE
SHOULDER. D'YA
KNOW THAT?

IT SHOULDN'T
HAVE KILLED HIM.
WE CHECKED FOR
EVERYTHING. HEART
ATTACK, STROKE,
ADRENALINE SPIKE.
NOTHING.

IT'S LIKE
HE JUST
DIED. LIKE THE
LIFE JUST WENT
OUT OF HIM,
LIKE A
CANDLE.

AND
LOOK HERE.
ON HIS
NECK...

WHAT
THE HELL
IS THAT?

BEATS
ME. SOME
KIND OF BRAND
OR MARK.
FREAKY,
huh?

2:19 A.M.

GOD DAMN IT, THERE'S ANOTHER ONE.

WHEN I WUZZA LIDDLE BIDDY BABY, M'MOMMA SHE ROCK ME INNA CRA-DLE...

HEY! BUDDY! YEAH! YOU!

I DI'NT DO NUFFIN.

YEAH-YEAH, I KNOW, AIN'T YOU HEARD? THE STREETS AIN'T SUCH A SMART PLACE TO BE THESE DAYS.

WHY DON'T'CHA GET IN AND LET ME GIVE YOU A RIDE TO THE SHELTER. YOU'LL BE SAFE THERE.

I DIDN'T DO NUFFIN, OFF-I-SUH! SWEAR!

YEAH, I KNOW, CALM DOWN. I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU OUT OF HERE.

WHAT?... I DON'T... BUT I DIDN'T DO NUFFIN... DON'T HURT ME... PLEASE...



WELL,
SPAWN...

LET'S SEE
IF WE CAN
SHED A LITTLE
LIGHT ON THE
MATTER...

IT'S
HORRIBLE, COG.
THESE MURDERS...
WHEN I CLOSE MY
EYES, I CAN SEE
THEM HAPPENING...
I FEEL THE PAIN
AND THE TERROR
OF THE
VICTIMS...

BUT
I CAN'T
SEE WHO'S
DOING
IT.

IT'S ONLY
GLIMPSES.
FRAG-
MENTS.

PIECES
OF A NIGHT-
MARE THAT
DON'T ADD
UP TO A
WHOLE.

AND IT'S
GETTING WORSE.
SOMEONE'S OUT
THERE PLAYING
SOME SICK
GAME, AND I
INTEND TO
END IT.

WELL,
WE'LL START
WITH STANDARD
REFERENCE
MATERIAL...



Hmm...
NOTHING IN
THE AULDWYCH
GRIMOIRE. LET'S
TRY THE DIARIES
OF ELIPHAS
LEVI.

THIS IS
POINTLESS,
COG. WE'RE
NOT GETTING
ANYWHERE
WITH ALL
THIS...

WAIT!



HERE.
THIS IS IT.
THIS IS WHAT
I SAW AT THE
MORGUE.



Hmm... IN THE
SERPENTINE ADDENDUM
OF ALL PLACES. IT'S WRITTEN
IN A SECRET CODE BROUGHT
BACK BY THE **KNIGHTS
TEMPLAR** DURING THE
CRUSADES.

I'M A LITTLE
RUSTY, BUT IT SAYS
SOMETHING ABOUT
THE **HANDS OF EVIL**
OR THE **VESSEL OF
WICKEDNESS**...

THE MARK
APPEARS WHEN
THE **SOUL** EXITS THE
BODY, CONDEMNED
TO HELL FOR THE
CRIMES IT
COMMITTED...

BUT WHAT
DOES IT
MEAN?

MONDAY
MORNING.
10 A.M.

GREAT
TO HAVE
YOU BACK,
BUDDY. I
MADE YOU
A PROTEIN
SHAKE.

WELL,
HOW 'BOUT
A MUSCLE BAR?
GOT DOUBLE
MOCHA OR
BANANA NUT
CRUNCH.

NO.
NO THANKS.
I'M FINE, SIR.
HONESTLY.

Oh, NO
THANK YOU,
SIR.

SIR, I DO
APPRECIATE YOUR
CONCERN AND IN
FACT FIND IT MOST
HEARTENING. BUT WE
DO HAVE SERIOUS
MATTERS TO ATTEND
TO. NAMELY, THIS
GRISLY MURDER
SPREE.

OKAY.
JUST TRYING
TO HELP,
BUDDY.

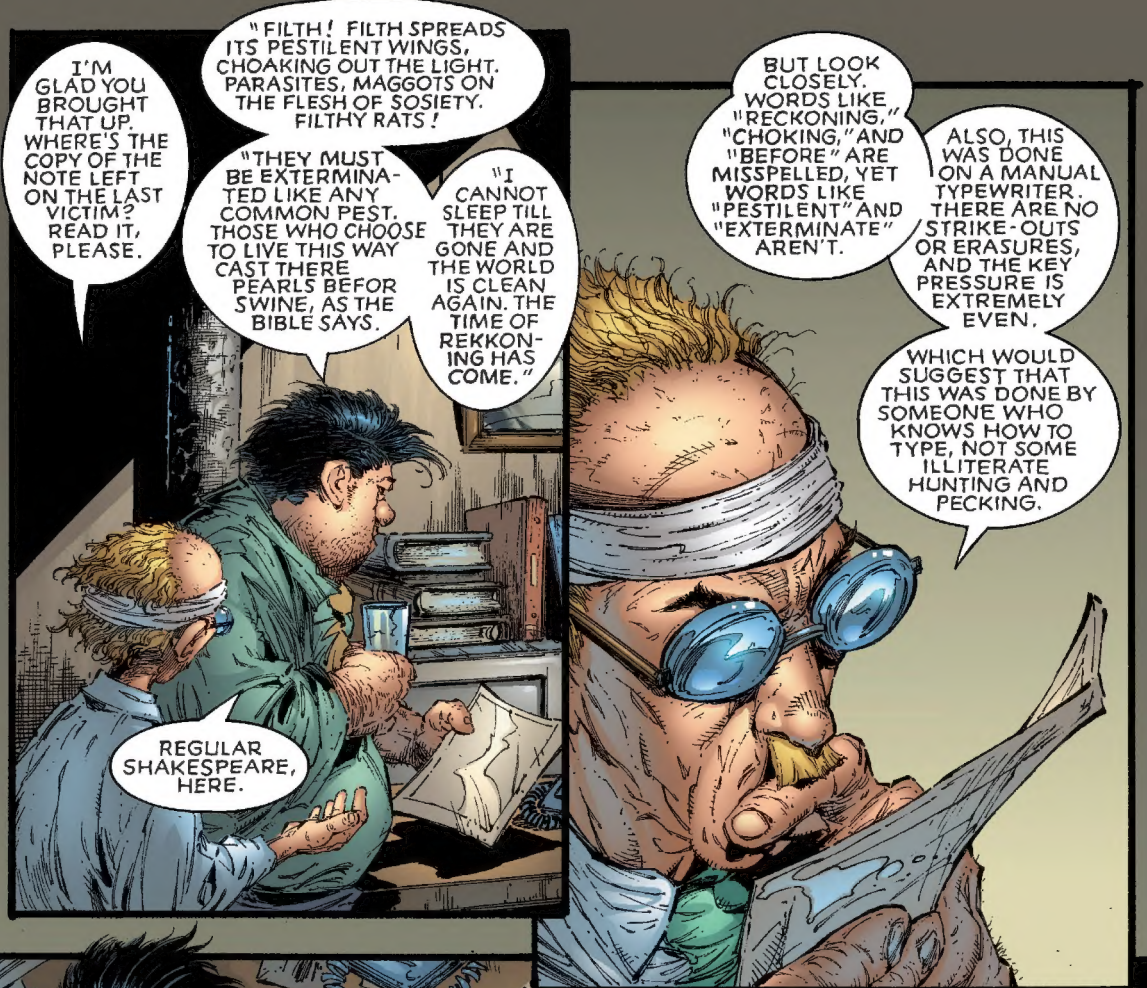
LOOK FOR
CREECH
ACTION
FIGURE

YOUR FIELD WORK
HAS BEEN EXCELLENT, SIR.
BUT THERE'S STILL ALMOST
NOTHING TO GO ON. NO
WITNESSES, NO MOTIVES,
NO SUSPECTS...

JUST A
GROWING
BACKLOG OF
CORPSES.

WHAT WE
DO KNOW IS:
ALL THE MURDERS
HAPPENED AT NIGHT.
I THINK WE CAN
ASSUME THAT THE
KILLER IS SOMEONE
OF CONSIDERABLE
STRENGTH AND
PHYSICAL
STATURE...

AND
THAT
HE CAN'T
SPELL FOR
BEANS.



I'M GLAD YOU BROUGHT THAT UP. WHERE'S THE COPY OF THE NOTE LEFT ON THE LAST VICTIM? READ IT, PLEASE.

"FILTH! FILTH SPREADS ITS PESTILENT WINGS, CHOAKING OUT THE LIGHT. PARASITES, MAGGOTS ON THE FLESH OF SOCIETY. FILTHY RATS!"

"THEY MUST BE EXTERMINATED LIKE ANY COMMON PEST. THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO LIVE THIS WAY CAST THESE PEARLS BEFORE SWINE, AS THE BIBLE SAYS."

"I CANNOT SLEEP TILL THEY ARE GONE AND THE WORLD IS CLEAN AGAIN. THE TIME OF REKKONING HAS COME."

BUT LOOK CLOSELY. WORDS LIKE "RECKONING," "CHOKING," AND "BEFORE" ARE MISPELLED, YET WORDS LIKE "PESTILENT" AND "EXTERMINATE" AREN'T.

ALSO, THIS WAS DONE ON A MANUAL TYPEWRITER. THERE ARE NO STRIKE-OUTS OR ERASURES, AND THE KEY PRESSURE IS EXTREMELY EVEN.

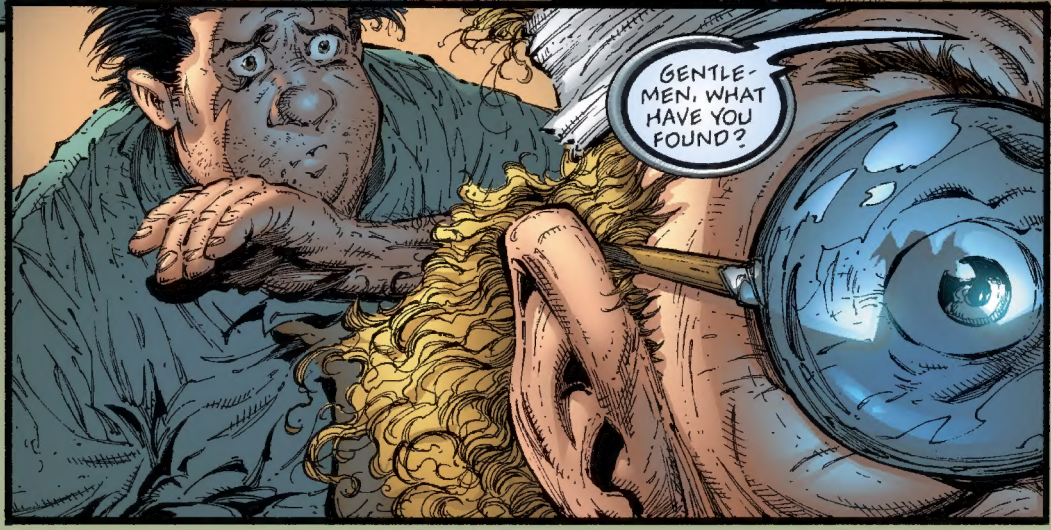
WHICH WOULD SUGGEST THAT THIS WAS DONE BY SOMEONE WHO KNOWS HOW TO TYPE, NOT SOME ILLITERATE HUNTING AND PECKING.

REGULAR SHAKESPEARE, HERE.

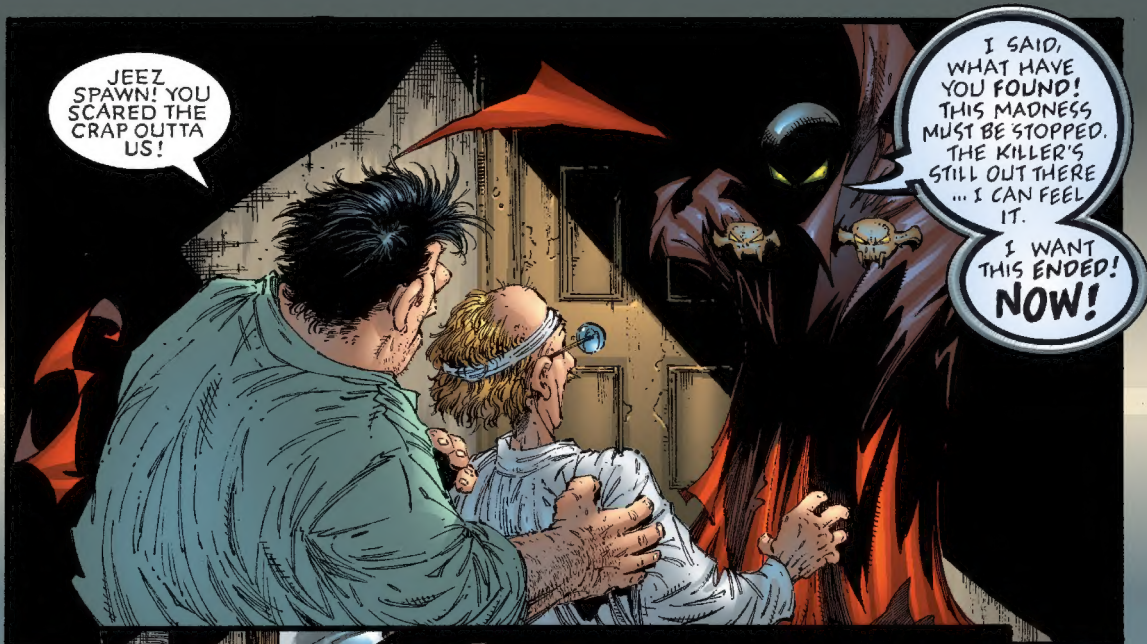


YOU THINK THE KILLER'S TRYING TO THROW US OFF THE TRACK, MAKE THE COPS LOOK FOR A RETARD RELIGIOUS FREAK?

IT IS A POSSIBILITY, SIR.



GENTLEMEN, WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND?



JEEZ
SPAWN! YOU
SCARED THE
CRAP OUTTA
US!

I SAID,
WHAT HAVE
YOU FOUND!
THIS MADNESS
MUST BE STOPPED.
THE KILLER'S
STILL OUT THERE
... I CAN FEEL
IT.

I WANT
THIS ENDED!
NOW!



YEAH,
SO DO WE.
WE'RE DOING
THE BEST WE
CAN, SO UNLESS
YOU HAVE
ANY...



**R
N
G**

HELLO?
YEAH, THIS
IS SAM.
OH MY GOD...
WHEN?
YEAH...

YEAH...
HOLD ON,
LET ME
WRITE THIS
DOWN... GOT
IT. OKAY.
THANKS.

SIR?

THEY
JUST
FOUND
ANOTHER
BODY.

THIS
TIME
IT'S A
CHILD.



TO BE
CONTINUED...



Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE